Scooby-Doo

Scooby-Doo is a long-running American animated series produced for Saturday morning television in several different versions from 1969 to the present. The original series, *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!*, was created for Hanna-Barbera Productions by writers Joe Ruby and Ken Spears, CBS executive Fred Silverman, and character designer Iwao Takamoto. Hanna-Barbera produced numerous spin-offs and related works until being absorbed in 1997 into Warner Bros. Animation, which has handled production since then. Although the format of the show and the cast (and ages) of characters have varied significantly over the years, the most familiar versions of the show feature a talking dog named Scooby-Doo and four teenagers: Fred "Freddie" Jones, Daphne Blake, Velma Dinkley, and Norville "Shaggy" Rogers.

These five characters (officially collectively known as "Mystery, Inc.", but never referred to as such in the original series) drive around the world in a van called the "Mystery Machine", and solve mysteries typically involving tales of ghosts and other supernatural forces. At the end of each episode, the supernatural forces sometimes turn out to have a rational explanation, typically criminal plots involving costumes, latex masks and special effects intended to frighten or distract. Later versions of *Scooby-Doo* featured different variations on the show's supernatural theme, and include characters such as Scooby's cousin Scooby-Dum and nephew Scrappy-Doo in addition to or instead of some of the original characters.

Scooby-Doo was originally broadcast on CBS from 1969 to 1976, when it moved to ABC. ABC aired the show until canceling it in 1986, and presented a spin-off, *A Pup Named Scooby-Doo*, from 1988 until 1991. The WB Network's Kids' WB programming block, later created an updated version of the series called *What's New Scooby Doo?* which ran from 2002 to 2006. The most recent *Scooby-Doo* series, *Shaggy & Scooby-Doo Get a Clue!*, ran from 2006 to 2008 on The CW network. Repeats of the series are broadcast frequently on the Cartoon Network and Boomerang in the United States and other countries.

Creation and development

In 1969, many of a number of parent-run organizations, most notably Action for Children's Television (ACT), began vocally protesting what they perceived as an excessive amount of gratuitous violence in Saturday morning cartoons during the mid-to-late 1960s.[1] Most of these shows were Hanna-Barbera action cartoons such as *Jonny Quest*, *Space Ghost* and *The Herculoids*, and virtually all of them were canceled by 1969

because of pressure from the parent groups. Members of these watchgroups served as advisers to Hanna-Barbera and other animation studios to ensure that their new programs would be safe for children.

Fred Silverman, executive in charge of children's programming for the CBS network at the time, was looking for a show that would revitalize his Saturday morning line and please the watchgroups at the same time. The result was *The Archie Show*, based upon Bob Montana's teenage humor comic book *Archie*. Also successful were the musical numbers The Archies performed during each program (one of which, "Sugar, Sugar", was the most successful *Billboard* number-one hit of 1969). Silverman was eager to expand upon this success, and contacted producers William Hanna and Joseph Barbera about possibly creating another show based around a teenage rock group, but with an extra spice: the kids would find mysteries in between their gigs. Silverman envisioned the show as a cross between the popular *I Love a Mystery* radio serials of the 1940s and the popular early 1960s TV show *The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis*.[2]

Hanna and Barbera passed this task along to two of their head story writers, Joe Ruby and Ken Spears, and artist/character designer Iwao Takamoto. Their original concept of the show bore the title *Mysteries Five*, and featured five teens (Geoff, Mike, Kelly, Linda, and Linda's brother "W.W.") and their dog, Too Much, who were all in a band called "The Mysteries Five" (even the dog; he played the bongos). When "The Mysteries Five" were not performing at gigs, they were out solving spooky mysteries involving ghosts, zombies, and other supernatural creatures. Ruby and Spears were unable to decide whether Too Much would be a large cowardly dog or a small feisty dog. When the former was chosen, the options became a large goofy Great Dane or a big shaggy sheepdog. After consulting with Barbera on the issue, Too Much was finally set as a Great Dane, primarily to avoid a direct correlation to The Archies (who had a sheepdog, Hot Dog, in their band). Ruby and Spears feared the Great Dane would be too similar to the comic strip character Marmaduke, but Barbera assured them it would not be a problem.[3]

Takamoto consulted a studio colleague who happened to be a breeder of Great Danes. After learning the characteristics of a prize-winning Great Dane from her, Takamoto proceeded to break most of the rules and designed Too Much with overly bowed legs, a double chin, and a sloped back, among other abnormalities.[4][5]

By the time the show was ready for presentation by Silverman, a few more things had changed: Geoff and Mike were merged into one character called "Ronnie" (later renamed "Fred", at Silverman's behest),[6] Kelly was renamed to "Daphne", Linda was now called "Velma", and Shaggy (formerly "W.W.") was no longer her brother. Also, Silverman – not being very fond of the name *Mysteries Five* – had renamed the show *Who's S-S-Scared?* Using storyboards, presentation boards, and a short completed animation sequence, Silverman presented *Who's S-S-Scared?* to the CBS executives as the centerpiece for the upcoming 1969–1970 season's Saturday morning cartoon block. The executives felt that the presentation artwork was too spooky for young viewers and, thinking the show would be the same, decided to pass on it.[3]

Now without a centerpiece for the upcoming season's programming, Silverman turned to Ruby and Spears, who reworked the show to make it more comedic and less frightening. They dropped the rock band element, and began to focus more attention on Shaggy and Too Much. According to Ruby and Spears, Silverman was inspired by Frank Sinatra's scat "doo-be-doo-be-doo" he heard at the end of Bert Kaempfert's song "Strangers in the Night" on the way out to one of their meetings, and decided to rename the dog "Scooby-Doo" and re-rechristen the show *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!*[3] The revised show was re-presented to CBS executives, who approved it for production.

It is also worth noting the similarity between the core premise of this and Enid Blyton's *Famous Five* books. Both series featured four youths with a dog. In both, one of the girls was attractive (Daphne/Anne) while the other plain (Velma/Georgina) and frequently the Famous Five stories would revolve around a mystery which would invariably turn out not to be mysterious but a plot to disguise the villain's true intents.

Scooby-Doo television series

The CBS years

Shaggy and Scooby-Doo confronted by a typical *Scooby-Doo* villain, a ghost from outer space. From *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!* season one, episode fifteen ("Spooky Space Kook", December 20 1969).

Scooby-Doo, Where Are You! made its CBS network debut on Saturday, September 13, 1969 with its first episode, "What a Night for a Knight". The original voice cast featured Don Messick as Scooby-Doo, Casey Kasem as Shaggy, Frank Welker as Fred, Nicole Jaffe as Velma, and Stefanianna Christopherson as Daphne. [7] Seventeen episodes of *Scooby-Doo* were produced in 1969. The series' eponymous theme song was written by David Mook and Ben Raleigh, and performed by Larry Marks.

The influences of *I Love a Mystery* and *Dobie Gillis* were especially apparent in these early episodes; Mark Evanier, who would write *Scooby-Doo* teleplays and comic book scripts in the 1970s and 1980s, identified each of the four teenagers with their corresponding *Dobie Gillis* character: "Fred was based on Dobie, Velma on Zelda, Daphne on Thalia and Shaggy on Maynard."[8] The similarities between Shaggy and Maynard are the most noticeable; both characters share the same beatnik-style goatee, similar hairstyles, and demeanours. The roles of each character are strongly defined in the series: Fred is the leader and the determined detective, Velma is the intelligent analyst, Daphne is danger-prone, and Shaggy and Scooby-Doo are cowardly types more motivated by hunger than any desire to solve mysteries. Later versions of the show would make slight changes to the characters' established roles, most notably in the character of Daphne, shown in 1990s and 2000s *Scooby-Doo* productions as knowing many forms of karate and being able to defend herself.

The plot of each episode followed a formula that would serve as a template for many of the later incarnations of the series. At the beginning of the episode, the Mystery, Inc. gang bump into some type of evil ghost or monster, which they learn has been terrorizing the local populace. The teens offer to help solve the mystery behind the creature, but while looking for clues and suspects, the gang (and in particular Shaggy and Scooby) run into the monster, who always gives chase. However, after analyzing the clues they have found, the gang determines that this monster is simply a mere mortal in disguise. They capture the monster, often with the use of a Rube Goldberg-type contraption built by Fred, and bring him to the police. Upon learning the villain's true identity, either the only person they had met or someone they hadn't seen before, the fiendish plot is fully explained, and the apprehended criminal would utter the famous catchphrase, or a variation thereof: "And I would have gotten away with it, if it wasn't for you meddling kids!"

Scooby-Doo, Where Are You! was a major ratings success for CBS, and they renewed it for a second season in 1970. The eight 1970 episodes of *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!* differed slightly from the first-season episodes in their uses of more slapstick humor, *Archie Show*-like "chase songs" during climactic sequences, Heather North performing the voice of Daphne in place of Christopherson, and a re-recorded version of the theme song sung by Austin Roberts. This season also marked an attempt at providing a real mystery with multiple suspects and red herring clues. Both seasons contained a laugh track, which was the standard practice for U.S. cartoon series during the 1960s and 1970s.

In 1972, after 25 half-hour episodes, the program was doubled to a full hour and called *The New Scooby-Doo Movies*, each episode of which featured a different guest star helping the gang solve mysteries. Among the most notable of these guest stars were the Harlem Globetrotters, the Three Stooges, Don Knotts and Batman & Robin, each of whom appeared at least twice on the show. Hanna-Barbera musical director Hoyt Curtin composed a new theme song for this series, and Curtin's theme would remain in use for much of *Scooby-Doo's* original broadcast run. After two seasons and 24 episodes of the

New Movies format from 1972 to 1974, the show went to reruns of the original series until *Scooby* moved to ABC in 1976.

The *Scooby* clones

Every episode of the original *Scooby-Doo* format contains a penultimate scene in which the kids unmask the ghost-of-the-week to reveal a real person in a costume. From *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!* season two, episode one ("Nowhere to Hyde", September 12 1970).

Hanna-Barbera then proceeded to repeat it many times over.[9] By the time *Scooby-Doo* had its first format change in 1972, Hanna-Barbera had produced three other teenager-based shows that were very similar to *Scooby* in concept and execution: *Josie and the Pussycats* (1970), which resurrected the idea of the rock band to the teenage-crime-fighter formula; *The Pebbles and Bamm-Bamm Show* (1971), which re-imagined the toddlers from *The Flintstones* as high school students; and the most blatant *Scooby* clone, *The Funky Phantom* (also 1971), which featured three teens, a real ghost and his ghostly cat solving spooky mysteries.

Later cartoons such as *The Amazing Chan and the Chan Clan* (1972); *Goober and the Ghost Chasers*, *Speed Buggy*, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kids*, and *Inch High, Private Eye* (all 1973); *Clue Club* and *Jabberjaw* (both 1976); *Captain Caveman and the Teen Angels* (1977); *Buford and the Galloping Ghost* (1978); and the *Pebbles, Dino, and Bamm-Bamm* segments of *The Flintstone Comedy Show (1980)* would all involve groups of teenagers solving mysteries or fighting crime in the same vein as *Scooby-Doo*, usually with the help of a wacky animal, ghost, etc. For example, *Speed Buggy* featured three teens and a talking dune buggy in the role of "Scooby", while *Jabberjaw* used four teens and a talking shark in a futuristic underwater environment. Some of these shows even used the same voice actors and score cues. Even outside studios got in on the act: when Joe Ruby and Ken Spears left H-B in 1977 and started Ruby-Spears Productions, their first cartoon was *Fangface,* yet another mystery-solving *Scooby* clone.

During the 1970s, the imitating programs successfully coexisted alongside *Scooby* on Saturday mornings. Most of the mystery-solving Hanna-Barbera shows made before 1975 were featured on CBS, and when Fred Silverman moved from CBS to ABC in 1975, the mystery-solving shows, including *Scooby-Doo*, followed him.

The ABC years

On ABC, the show went through almost yearly format changes. For their 1976–1977 season, new episodes of Scooby-Doo were joined with a new Hanna-Barbera show, *Dynomutt, Dog Wonder*, to create *The Scooby-Doo/Dynomutt Hour*. (It became *The Scooby-Doo/Dynomutt Show* when a bonus *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!* rerun was added to it in November 1976.) This hour-long package show later evolved into the longer programming blocks *Scooby's All-Star Laff-A-Lympics* (1977–1978) and *Scooby's All-Stars* (1978–1979).

New *Scooby* episodes, in the original *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!* format, were produced for each of these three seasons. Four of these episodes featured Scooby's dim-witted country cousin Scooby-Dum as a semi-regular character. The *Scooby-Doo* episodes produced during these three seasons were later packaged together for syndication as *The Scooby-Doo Show*, under which title they continue to air. For the *Scooby's All-Star Laff-A-Lympics* and *Scooby's All-Stars* programming blocks, *Scooby-Doo* was packaged alongside *Laff-A-Lympics*, a new Hanna-Barbera cartoon featuring many of its characters in parodies of Olympic sporting events. Scooby-Doo appeared on the show as the team captain of the "Scooby Doobies" team, with Shaggy and Scooby-Dum among his teammates.

In 1979, Scooby's tiny nephew Scrappy-Doo was added to both the series and the billing, in an attempt to boost *Scooby-Doo*'s slipping ratings. The 1979–1980 episodes, aired under the title *Scooby-Doo and Scrappy-Doo*, succeeded in regenerating interest in the show, and as a result the entire show was overhauled in 1980 to focus more upon Scrappy-Doo. The ratings improved with children, but many long-time fans reviled the Scrappy-Doo character. Fred, Daphne, and Velma were dropped from the series, and the new *Scooby-Doo and Scrappy-Doo* format was now composed of three seven-minute comedic adventures starring Scooby, Scrappy, and Shaggy instead of one half-hour mystery. This version of *Scooby-Doo and Scrappy-Doo* aired as part of *The Richie Rich/Scooby-Doo Show* from 1980 to 1982, and as part of *The Scooby-Doo/Scrappy-Doo/Puppy Hour* from 1982 to 1983. Most of the supernatural villains in the seven-minute *Scooby and Scrappy* cartoons, who in previous *Scooby* series had been revealed to be human criminals in costume, were now "real" within the context of the series. Daphne returned to the cast for *The All-New Scooby and Scrappy-Doo Show* in 1983, which comprised two 11-minute episodes in a format reminiscent of the original *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!* mysteries. This version of the show lasted for two seasons, with the second season airing under the title *The New Scooby-Doo Mysteries* and featuring semi-regular appearances from Fred and Velma.

1985 saw the debut of *The 13 Ghosts of Scooby-Doo*, which featured Daphne, Shaggy, Scooby, Scrappy, and new characters Flim-Flam and Vincent Van Ghoul (based upon and voiced by Vincent Price) traveling the globe to capture "thirteen of the most terrifying ghosts and ghouls on the face of the earth." The final first-run episode of *The 13 Ghosts of Scooby-Doo* aired in March 1986, and no new *Scooby* series aired on the network for the next two years. Reruns of previous *Scooby* episodes, however, continued

to air, both as part of the *Scooby-Doo Mystery Funhouse* package and under the *New Scooby and Scrappy-Doo Show* banner.

Hanna-Barbera reincarnated the original *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!* cast as junior high school students for *A Pup Named Scooby-Doo*, which debuted on ABC in 1988. *A Pup Named Scooby-Doo* was an irreverent, zany re-imagining of the series, heavily inspired by the classic cartoons of Tex Avery and Bob Clampett, and eschewed the quasi-reality of the original *Scooby* series for a more *Looney Tunes*-like style, including an episode where **Scooby-Doo**'s parents show up and reveal his real name to be "Scoobert." The retooled show was a success, and lasted until 1991.

Reruns and revival

Reruns of the show have been in syndication since 1980, and have also been shown on cable television networks such as TBS Superstation (until 1989) and USA Network (as part of the USA Cartoon Express from 1990 to 1994). In 1993, *A Pup Named Scooby-Doo*, having just recently ended its network run on ABC, began reruns on the Cartoon Network; the other versions of *Scooby-Doo* joined it the following year and became exclusive to the Turner networks: Cartoon Network, TBS Superstation, and TNT. Canadian network Teletoon began airing *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!* in 1997, with the other *Scooby* series soon following. When TBS and TNT ended their broadcasts of H-B cartoons in 1998, *Scooby-Doo* became the exclusive property of both Cartoon Network and sister station Boomerang.

In 2002, following the successes of the Cartoon Network reruns and four late-1990s direct-to-video *Scooby-Doo* releases, the original version of the gang was updated for the 21st century for *What's New, Scooby-Doo?*, which aired on Kids' WB from 2002 until 2005, with second-run episodes also appearing on Cartoon Network. Unlike previous *Scooby* series, the show was produced at Warner Bros. Animation, which had absorbed Hanna-Barbera in 2001. The show returned to the familiar format of the original series for the first time since 1978, with modern-day technology and culture added to the mix to give the series a more contemporary feel, along with new, digitally-recorded sound effects and music. With Don Messick having died in 1997, Frank Welker took over as Scooby's voice actor, while continuing to provide the voice of Fred as well, and Casey Kasem returned as Shaggy. Grey DeLisle provided the voice of Daphne (she first took the role on *Scooby-Doo and the Cyber Chase*, replacing Mary Kay Bergman, who committed suicide shortly before the release of *Scooby-Doo and the Alien Invaders*) and former *Facts of Life* star Mindy Cohn voiced Velma.

After three seasons, *What's New, Scooby-Doo* was replaced in September 2006 with *Shaggy & Scooby-Doo Get a Clue!*, a major revamping of the series which debuted on The CW's Kids' WB Saturday morning programming block. The premise centers around Shaggy inheriting money and a mansion from an uncle, an inventor who has gone into hiding from villains trying to steal his secret invention. The villains, led by "Dr. Phibes" (based primarily upon Dr. Evil from the *Austin Powers* series, and named after Vincent Price's character from *The Abominable Dr. Phibes*), then use different schemes to try to

get the invention from Shaggy and Scooby, who handle the plots alone. Fred, Daphne, and Velma are normally absent, but do make appearances at times to help. The characters were redesigned and the art style revised for the new series. Shaggy and Scooby were slightly developed to make them more charismatic and intelligent due to the adventure-esque pacing.

Television specials, telefilms, and direct-to-video features

The *Scooby-Doo* characters first appeared outside of their regular Saturday morning format in *Scooby Goes Hollywood*, an hour-long ABC television special aired in prime time on December 13, 1979. The special revolved around Shaggy and Scooby's attempts to have the network move Scooby out of Saturday morning and into a prime-time series, and featured spoofs of then-current TV shows and films such as *Happy Days*, *Superman*, *Laverne & Shirley*, and *Charlie's Angels*.

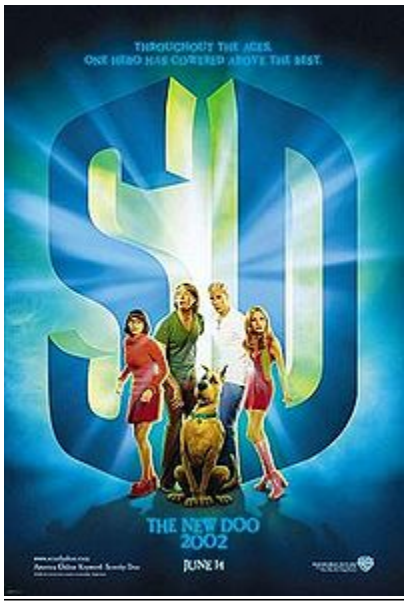
From 1986 to 1988, Hanna-Barbera Productions produced *Hanna-Barbera Superstars 10*, a series of syndicated telefilms featuring their most popular characters, including Yogi Bear, Huckleberry Hound, The Flintstones, and The Jetsons. Scooby-Doo, Scrappy-Doo, and Shaggy starred in three of these movies: *Scooby-Doo Meets the Boo Brothers* (1987), *Scooby-Doo and the Reluctant Werewolf* (1988), and *Scooby-Doo and the Ghoul School* (1988). In addition, Scooby-Doo and Shaggy appeared as the narrators of the made-for-TV movie *Arabian Nights*, originally broadcast by TBS in 1994 and later released on video as *Scooby-Doo in Arabian Nights*.

Starting in 1998, Warner Bros. Animation and Hanna-Barbera (by then a subsidiary of Warner Bros.), began producing one new *Scooby-Doo* direct-to-video movie a year. These movies featured a slightly older version of the original five-character cast from the *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!* days, and disregards the later Scrappy-Doo years as non-canonical. The movies include *Scooby-Doo on Zombie Island* (1998), *Scooby-Doo and the Witch's Ghost* (1999), *Scooby-Doo and the Alien Invaders* (2000), and *Scooby-Doo and the Cyber Chase* (2001). Also in 2001, the Cartoon Network produced *Night of the Living Doo*, a half-hour parody of the *New Scooby-Doo Movies* format featuring "special guest stars" David Cross, Gary Coleman, Mark Hamill and Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, complete with a classic retro-feel. In 2008, Cartoon Network announced that they were making a Scooby-Doo telefilm that follows the gang when they first met back in high school; the film will premiere in 2009.

The success of the direct-to-video movies led to Scooby's return to Saturday morning, *What's New, Scooby-Doo?*, and Hanna-Barbera based later entries in this series of *Scooby* movies on it rather than the previous editions. This includes *Scooby-Doo and the Legend of the Vampire* (2002), *Scooby-Doo and the Monster of Mexico* (2003), *Scooby-Doo and the Loch Ness Monster* (2004), *Aloha, Scooby-Doo!* (2004), *Scooby-Doo! in Where's My Mummy?* (2005), *Scooby-Doo! Pirates Ahoy!* (2006), and *Chill Out, Scooby-Doo!* (2007).

A number of these *Scooby-Doo* telefilms and direct-to-video features, as well as many of the early-1980s shows featuring Scrappy-Doo, feature the gang encountering actual supernatural beings. In *Scooby-Doo and the Ghoul School* (1988), Shaggy, Scooby, and Scrappy sign up as gym teachers for Miss Grimwood's school for girls, only to find it is actually a school for ghouls, where the trio end up teaching the daughters of Frankenstein's monster, Dracula, the Wolf Man, The Mummy, and the stereotypical ghost monster (Phantasma the Phantom). *Scooby-Doo on Zombie Island* (1998) featured the original 1969 gang, reunited after years of being apart, fighting voodoo-worshiping cat creatures in the Louisiana bayou. *Scooby-Doo and the Witch's Ghost* featured an author (Tim Curry) returning to his home with the gang, to find out that an event is being haunted by the author's dead grandmother, who was an actual witch. The later *What's New, Scooby-Doo*-based entries in the direct-to-video series returned to the original formula, and are basically extended episodes of the *What's New, Scooby-Doo* series, with the exceptions of *Scooby-Doo and the Legend of the Vampire* and *Scooby-Doo and the Monster of Mexico*, both of which were done in a retro style, which unlike the newer TV series, made it resemble an old *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You?* production, complete with the original voice cast and sound effects.

Live-action Warner Bros. feature films



Warner Bros.' 2002 live-action *Scooby-Doo* feature film was a box office success, and resulted in a sequel two years later.

A feature-length live-action film version of *Scooby-Doo* was released by Warner Bros. in 2002. The cast included Freddie Prinze, Jr., as Fred, Sarah Michelle Gellar as Daphne, Matthew Lillard as Shaggy, and Linda Cardellini as Velma. Scooby-Doo was created on-screen by computer-generated special effects. *Scooby-Doo* was a successful release, with a domestic box office gross of over $130 million.[10] However, the film was not well reviewed, but was a great hit with kids and fans of the show.[11] A sequel, *Scooby-Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed*, followed in March 2004, and earned US$84 (€55,98) (€55,98) million at the U.S. box office.[12]

The 2002 film version departed considerably from the standard *Scooby-Doo* formula in that the paranormal is real and the skepticism of the original series is ridiculed. Various elements of that formula are parodied in both movies. While the first film had generally original characters as the villains (except for one villain revealed as a surprise plot twist), the second film featured several of the monsters from the television series, including the Black Knight, the 10,000 Volt Ghost, the Pterodactyl Ghost, the Miner 49er, and Chickenstein. The animated versions of Shaggy and Scooby make a cameo appearance in the 2003 film *Looney Tunes: Back in Action*, complaining to Matthew Lillard about how they were portrayed in the live action films.

A "prequel" live-action movie (*Scooby-Doo: In The Beginning*) is scheduled to be released on DVD and simultaneously aired on Cartoon Network in Fall 2009. The roles have been recast with lesser-known actors.[13]

Critical reaction and awards

While a successful series during its three separate tenures on Saturday morning, *Scooby-Doo* won no awards for artistic merit during its original series runs. The series has received only two Emmy nominations in its four-decade history: a 1989 Daytime Emmy nomination for *A Pup Named Scooby Doo*, and a 2003 Daytime Emmy nomination for *What's New, Scooby-Doo*'s Mindy Cohn in the "Outstanding Performer in an Animated Program" category.[*citation needed*] Like many Hanna-Barbera shows, *Scooby-Doo* was criticized for poor production values and formulaic storytelling. In 2002, Jamie Malanowski of *The New York Times* commented that "[*Scooby-Doo's*] mysteries are not very mysterious, and the humor is hardly humorous. As for the animation -- well, the drawings on your refrigerator may give it competition."[14] Even proponents of the series often comment negatively about the formula inherent in most *Scooby* episodes.[15] Methodological naturalist Carl Sagan, however, favorably compared the formula to that of most television dealing with paranormal themes, and considered that an adult analogue to *Scooby-Doo* would be a great public service.[16]

Nevertheless, *Scooby-Doo* has maintained a significant fan base, which has grown steadily since the 1990s due to the show's popularity among both young children and nostalgic adults who grew up with the series.[17] The show's mix of the comedy-adventure

and horror genres is often noted as the reason for its widespread success.[18] As Fred Silverman and the Hanna-Barbera staff had planned when they first began producing the series, *Scooby-Doo's* ghosts, monsters, and spooky locales tend more towards humor than horror, making them easily accessible to younger children. "Overall, [*Scooby-Doo* is] just not a show that is going to overstimulate kids' emotions and tensions," offered American Center for Children and Media executive director David Kleeman in a 2002 interview. "It creates just enough fun to make it fun without getting them worried or giving them nightmares.[19]

In recent years, *Scooby-Doo* has received recognition for its popularity by placing in a number of "top cartoon" or "top cartoon character" polls. The August 3, 2002, issue of *TV Guide* featured its list of the "50 Greatest Cartoon Characters of All Time", in which Scooby-Doo placed twenty-second[20] Scooby also ranked thirteenth in Animal Planet's list of the "50 Greatest TV Animals".[21] *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!* ranked forty-ninth in the UK network Channel 4's 2005 list of the "100 Greatest Cartoons of All Time".[22] For one year from 2004 to 2005, *Scooby-Doo* held the Guinness World Record for having the most episodes of any animated television series ever produced, a record previously held by and later returned to *The Simpsons*. *Scooby-Doo* was published as holding this record in the 2006 edition of the *Guinness Book of Records*.[23]

Subsequent television shows and films often make reference to *Scooby-Doo*, for example *Wayne's World* and the television series, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, in which Buffy and her monster-slaying friends refer to themselves as the "Scooby Gang" or "Scoobies", a knowing reference to *Scooby-Doo* (coincidentally, Sarah Michelle Gellar, who played Buffy, later played Daphne in the live-action movies). A plethora of other media properties have referenced or parodied *Scooby-Doo*, among them the *TV Funhouse* segment of NBC's *Saturday Night Live*, the online comic *Sluggy Freelance*, the FOX animated series, *The Simpsons*, and the Cartoon Network program *Johnny Bravo* and Adult Swim's *The Venture Bros*.

Merchandising

A 1966 Chevrolet Sportvan 108, painted to look like the Mystery Machine from *Scooby-Doo*. A number of *Scooby* fans have decorated vans in this fashion.

The first *Scooby-Doo*-related merchandise came in the form of *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!* comic books by Gold Key Comics, which initially contained adaptations of episodes of the cartoon show when publication began in December 1969. The book soon moved to all-original stories, and continued publication until December 1974. It ran for 30 issues. Charlton published *Scooby* comics, many drawn by Bill Williams, from February 1975 to October 1975, with a total of 11 issues. Since then, *Scooby-Doo* comics have been published by Marvel Comics (9 issues, written by Mark Evanier and drawn by Dan Spiegle), Harvey Comics (reprints of Charlton, 3 regular issues, 2 Giant size, and 2 big book), Archie Comics (Ran for 21 isssues, 1-13 were the only Scooby comics in US to ever feature Scrappy in stories, Archie also made a one shot of a Pup Named Scooby-Doo (Hanna-Barbera Presents #5)), and DC Comics, who continue to publish a monthly *Scooby-Doo* series.

Other early *Scooby-Doo* merchandise included a 1973 Milton Bradley board game, decorated lunch boxes, iron-on transfers, coloring books, story books, records, underwear, and other such goods.[24] When Scrappy-Doo was introduced to the series in 1979, he, Scooby, and Shaggy became the sole foci of much of the merchandising, including a 1983 Milton-Bradley *Scooby-Doo and Scrappy-Doo* board game. The first *Scooby-Doo* video game appeared in arcades in 1986, and has been followed by a number of games for both home consoles and personal computers. *Scooby-Doo* multivitamins also debuted at this time, and have been manufactured by Bayer since 2001.

Scooby-Doo merchandising tapered off during the late 1980s and early 1990s, but increased after the series' revival on Cartoon Network in 1995. Today, all manner of *Scooby-Doo*-branded products are available for purchase, including *Scooby-Doo* breakfast cereal, plush toys, action figures, car decorations, and much more. Real "Scooby Snacks" dog treats are produced by Del Monte Pet Products. Hasbro has created a number of *Scooby* board games, including a *Scooby*-themed edition of the popular mystery board game *Clue*. In 2007, the Pressman Toy Corporation released the board game *Scooby-Doo! Haunted House*. Beginning in 2001, a *Scooby-Doo* children's book series was authorized and published by Scholastic. These books, written by Suzanne Weyn, include originals stories and adaptations of *Scooby* theatrical and direct-to-video features.

From 1990 to 2002, Shaggy and Scooby-Doo appeared as characters in the *Funtastic World of Hanna-Barbera* simulator ride at Universal Studios Florida.[25] The ride was replaced in the early 2000s with a *Jimmy Neutron* attraction, and *The Funtastic World of Hanna-Barbera* instead became an attraction at several properties operated by Paramount Parks. Shaggy and Scooby-Doo are costumed characters at Universal Studios Florida, and can be seen driving the Mystery Machine around the park.